

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**LISTING OF CLAIMS:**

1. (Currently Amended) A method that validates a consistency of attributes of entities modeling a physical asset of a utility, said entities are stored in data sets of a multitude of different IT systems of the ~~entity~~ utility,

wherein said entities are assigned to entity types, holding a list of available attributes,

wherein a consistency service includes

an input buffer in which an entity to be validated for consistency of **[[its]]** attributes of the entity can be placed,

output means in which the result of the consistency validation can be stored and

communication means to communicate with the different IT systems,

wherein an adapter for each of the IT systems allows communication between the consistency service and the IT systems, and

wherein a reference storage holds references to the entities in the data sets of the various IT systems such that a specific entity in a specific IT system can be addressed through the adapter of the specific IT system and based on such a reference stored in the reference storage,

said method comprising the following steps:

loading the entity to be validated for consistency of [[its]] attributes of the entity into the buffer of the consistency service, wherein the physical asset carries the attributes of the entity

reading ~~the~~ values of the attributes of the entity through the adapter of an IT system,

comparing, in the consistency service, the values of the attributes of the entity to values of reference attributes stored in the consistency service, and

storing consistency validating information in the output means, said consistency validating information depending on the results of the comparison of the values of the attributes to the values of the reference attributes.

2. (Previously Presented) The method as in claim 1, wherein a hash code is computed from the values of the attributes of the entity and compared to a reference hash code computed from the values of the reference attributes, and the values of the attributes are compared to the values of the reference attributes by comparing the computed hash codes.

3. (Currently Amended) The method as in claim 1, wherein the adapter for each of the IT systems allows communication between the consistency service and the IT systems such that a signal sent by the consistency service to verify the existence of a specific data set of an IT system can be sent back to the consistency service if that specific data set exists, the method further comprising the following step:

the consistency service sending a signal to verify the existence of a specific data set of an IT system to the IT system holding the entity to be validated for consistency of [[its]] attributes of the entity prior to reading the values of the attributes of the entity through the adapter of the IT system, and

aborting the consistency validating of the entity if the signal is not being sent back to the consistency service.

4. (Previously Presented) The method as in claim 3, further comprising the following step:

logging failure of consistency validation if the signal is not being sent back to the consistency service by adding entity, which was to be validated for consistency, and the IT system, which was not replying to the signal, to a log file.

5. (Previously Presented) The method as in claim 3, further comprising the following step:

the consistency service checking communication to the IT system holding the data set to be verified prior to sending signal to verify the existence of the specific data set of that IT system.

6. (Previously Presented) The method as in claim 1, further comprising the following step:

a multitude of entities to be validated for consistency being loaded into the buffer of the consistency service,

the consistency service successively processing the entities to be validated for consistency, sending out signals and storing consistency validating information in the output means.

7. (Previously Presented) A computer program product stored in a memory and when loaded into an internal memory of a digital computer, comprising computer program code means to make, when said program is loaded in the computer, the computer execute the method of claim 1.

8. (Currently Amended) A system that validates a consistency of attributes of entities modeling a physical asset of a utility, which entities are stored in data sets of a multitude of different IT systems of the utility and which entities are assigned to entity types holding a list of available attributes, said system comprising:

a consistency service having:

an input buffer in which an entity to be validated for consistency of **[[its]]** attributes of the entity can be placed, wherein the physical asset carries the attributes of the entity;

output means for storing ~~in which the a~~ result of the consistency validation ~~can be stored and~~ validation; and

communication means ~~to communicate~~ for communicating with the different IT systems,

wherein an adapter for each of the IT systems allows communication between the consistency service and the IT systems, and

wherein a reference storage holds references to the entities in the data sets of the various IT systems such that a specific entity in a specific IT system can be addressed through the adapter of the specific IT system and based on such a reference stored in the reference storage,

wherein the consistency service comprises **[[:]]** means for comparing the values of the attributes of a specific entity to values of reference attributes stored in the consistency service, and

wherein the output means ~~for storing~~ stores the consistency validating information depending on the results of the comparison of the values of the attributes to the values of the reference attributes.

9. (Previously Presented) The system of Claim 8, wherein the reference storage further holds entity types, to which each entity can be assigned, said entity types defining a list of available attributes of the entities.

10. (Previously Presented) The system of Claim 8, wherein the consistency service further holds a reference hash code computed from the values of the reference attributes and to be compared to a hash code computed from the values of the attributes of the specific entity.

11. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the different IT systems include any combination of a supervisory control and data acquisition system, a computerized maintenance management system, and a geographic information system.

12 (New) The system of claim 8, wherein the different IT systems includes any combination of a supervisory control and data acquisition system, a computerized maintenance management system, and a geographic information system.